

**General Assembly**

Sixtieth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
8 December 2005

Original: English

Second Committee**Summary record of the 30th meeting**

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 15 November 2005, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Koudelka (Vice-Chairman)..... (Czech Republic)**Contents**Agenda item 56: Eradication of poverty and other development issues (*continued*)(a) Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006) (*continued*)(b) Women in development (*continued*)(c) Human resources development (*continued*)

Agenda item 58: Training and research

(a) United Nations Institute for Training and Research

(b) United Nations System Staff College in Turin, Italy

Agenda item 54: Globalization and interdependence (*continued*)(d) Preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of funds of illicit origin and returning such assets to the countries of origin (*continued*)Agenda item 52: Sustainable development (*continued*)(c) International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (*continued*)(f) Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy, including the implementation of the World Solar Programme 1996-2005 (*continued*)

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

05-60371 (E)



Agenda item 57: Operational activities for development (*continued*)

- (b) South-South cooperation: economic and technical cooperation among developing countries (*continued*)

Agenda item 55: Groups of countries in special situations (*continued*)

- (a) Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (*continued*)

In the absence of Mr. Wali (Nigeria), Mr. Koudelka (Czech Republic), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 56: Eradication of poverty and other development issues (*continued*) (A/60/79 and 111, and A/C.2/60/3)

(a) **Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)** (*continued*) (A/60/84, 115 and 314)

(b) **Women in development** (*continued*) (A/60/162)

(c) **Human resources development** (*continued*) (A/60/318)

1. **Mr. Bodini** (San Marino) said that, despite widespread agreement on the need to eradicate poverty and the devotion of significant resources to that end, the achievement of the relevant Millennium Development Goal was uncertain. Economic growth alone was not sufficient to eradicate poverty. It was of paramount importance for developing countries to establish an effective legal framework for labour and social security so as to improve the quality of existing employment and alleviate the problem of underemployment, while maintaining the necessary flexibility to create new jobs and develop small businesses. Sufficient resources should be devoted to education and vocational training to ensure higher productivity and better pay, and cultural obstacles should be removed so as to ensure that women had full access to the labour market.

2. The amount of resources that developed countries could devote to the eradication of poverty in developing countries depended on their own economic situation. Many industrialized countries, especially in Western Europe, were facing difficult economic conditions and some were experiencing unprecedented social unrest. If unemployment increased in developed countries, owing to the reduction of trade barriers and other concessions to developing countries, their priority would be to take care of the poorest sectors of their own society. Furthermore, the proportion of elderly in the populations of developed countries was growing, with resulting increases in health and pension costs.

3. A balance must be achieved that would not deprive the people of wealthier nations of their well-being, and that would encourage the governments of the most successful developing countries to spread their new wealth more justly and effectively among their own citizens, especially women, and ensure that the people of the least developed countries had the benefit of democratic and transparent leadership to guide them out of poverty.

4. **Mr. Snoussi** (Tunisia) noted that the report of the Secretary-General on the centrality of employment to poverty eradication (A/60/314) was limited to the national context and had not evoked the migratory and trade-related aspects of employment or the brain drain, with its adverse effects on developing countries.

5. Investment in employment-intensive sectors, such as agriculture, was needed in order to reduce rural poverty and marginalization. Investment in the rural economy was a strategic choice with a multiplier effect on production, farm income and food security, as well as economic growth and human development; however, such a strategy required the necessary financial resources and guaranteed market access.

6. Insecurity had its roots in poverty; therefore, with no real possibilities of development, there was a continuous risk of economic and political instability throughout the world. Poverty was the symptom of a global environment plagued by inequality, and the fight against poverty required a global alliance based on shared responsibility, cooperation and solidarity.

7. Official development assistance (ODA) was a catalyst for development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, because development was a long-term process that required the mobilization of financial, human and technical resources beyond the means of many countries. Innovative funding sources were a complement to ODA. In that context, the international community should ensure the operationalization of the World Solidarity Fund, established by the General Assembly.

8. Trade was important for financing development and combating poverty. The development dimension should be made central to trade negotiations, in accordance with the Doha Development Agenda, and the multilateral trading system should be made more equitable and open, bearing in mind the trade priorities of developing countries, particularly the least developed countries.

9. Efforts should be made to strengthen the capacity of developing countries to manage their debt, because growth, human development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals depended on maintaining sustainable debt levels. The international community should identify a mechanism that allowed debt to be cancelled or reduced without compromising the stability of the international financial institutions.

10. **Mr. Baja** (Philippines), referring to the report of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on the International Year of Rice — 2004 (A/C.2/60/3), said that the combined efforts of the relevant United Nations agencies, Member States and international organizations had helped to raise awareness of the vital role of rice in providing food security and eradicating poverty. They had also led to increased support for the development of sustainable rice-based production systems, which were essential ingredients of economic growth and development.

11. During the International Year of Rice, the Philippines had intensified its efforts to promote and provide guidance for an efficient and sustainable increase in rice-based production as a means of maintaining the country's rice sufficiency and meeting the challenges of food security. However, sustained international efforts were required to address the many aspects of rice promotion, since rice could play a vital role in ensuring global food security.

12. Most of the more than 80 million people suffering from hunger and malnutrition lived in areas dependent on rice production for food, income and employment. A focus on sustainable rice cultivation was becoming increasingly important in view of the growth in global population and the corresponding escalation in the demand for rice. Proper cultivation and sustainable production of rice would significantly reduce poverty and environmental damage; but the growth in production was declining owing to competing uses of land and water resources, reduced economic returns, high rates of post-harvest losses, increasing labour shortages, institutional limitations and environmental pollution.

13. The bulk of the world's labour force worked in the agricultural sector and three quarters of the working poor were in developing countries. The International Year of Rice would have succeeded when more rice became available, accessible and affordable to urban and rural poor, when farm incomes increased

and when additional rural employment opportunities were created.

14. **Mr. Gunasekera** (Sri Lanka) said that, although it was currently addressing the setbacks caused by the 2004 tsunami, Sri Lanka was confident of achieving the Millennium Development Goals ahead of schedule. The Government accorded top priority to education and health; nevertheless, poverty remained a major challenge and development initiatives were being realigned in order to reduce socio-economic disparities.

15. The poor represented a body of human resources with great potential, provided their basic needs were met and they were mobilized to create economic growth. The Government had adopted relevant policies and, in particular, was trying to improve the well-being and incomes of the rural poor through a community-driven development approach, because it considered that the poor themselves should take part in formulating solutions to their problems.

16. Many developing countries had opened up their economies on the assumption that increased trade, rather than aid, would engender economic development. Yet trade barriers were an obstacle to recovery and growth. Consequently, market access on concessionary terms would have a significant impact on poverty reduction and wealth creation. In addition, debt burdens continued to weigh down the economies of developing countries and significant progress must be made at the Sixth World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference to be held in Hong Kong in December 2005.

17. Sri Lanka was actively involved in efforts to improve the status of women and had elected the first woman Head of State in 1960. The literacy rate for women was 97 per cent; there were more girls than boys at all levels of the educational system, and women were well represented in both the public and the private sectors. The Government had directed that all governmental programmes should contain a gender component and that the gender impact of every programme should be assessed.

18. **Mr. Chia** (Singapore) said that, since people were Singapore's only natural resource, the country had invested heavily in education and training. Singapore believed that education was not an end in itself but a means to equip its people with the necessary skills to meet the challenges of their workplace and contribute to national development.

Government bodies had worked closely with the private sector, labour unions and other stakeholders to ascertain the skills required under the nation's economic development blueprints and translate them into targets for educational institutions. The close partnership between industry and education was evidenced by how the country's economy and education system had evolved over the years. With the shift to export-oriented industrialization in the early 1970s, greater emphasis had been given to technical and vocational training; in the 1980s and 1990s, science and technology had been stressed.

19. However, the rapid technological changes and intense competition driven by information and communication technologies, increasing globalization and economic liberalization had introduced new challenges, which Singapore has met with a renewed human resource development strategy, following extensive consultations with all concerned. The strategy aimed to help the people of Singapore remain relevant and competent in the new knowledge-based economy, by encouraging educational programmes to focus on ongoing learning for lifelong skills and retraining programmes.

20. In its human resource development strategy, Singapore had benefited from the technical assistance provided by developed countries and international organizations. It believed in making a contribution in return; therefore, technical assistance aimed at training and increasing skills was the core objective of its international cooperation programme and more than 38,000 government officials from 161 developing countries had received training in Singapore since 1993. While not all Singapore's experiences were applicable, the principles, approaches and institutions adopted were worth studying and could be adapted to other countries.

21. **Mr. Muda** (Malaysia) said that little had been achieved, despite all the recent international commitments and global awareness of the need to combat poverty. The responsibility for poverty eradication rested primarily with national Governments, but they needed support from the international system. Positive economic growth required a conducive and enabling environment. Market access and foreign direct investment would help to promote economic growth and generate productive employment.

22. Growth with equity had always been the thrust of Malaysia's development planning, with emphasis on efforts to enhance income-generating opportunities. It had always recognized the multidimensional nature of poverty and the need for practical and integrated approaches to effectively eradicate poverty. Its development plans were divided into core national policies, and sectoral and industry-specific master plans. Malaysia's poverty index now stood at less than five per cent and, in the coming years, its development policies would focus on reducing extreme poverty to zero per cent by 2009. The Secretary-General's report on the centrality of employment to poverty eradication (A/60/314) had stated that poverty reduction could not be achieved without focusing on the agricultural sector and Malaysia had taken specific steps to raise the income of those employed in that sector.

23. The Government had also provided financial assistance to enable the children of the poor to pursue their education to the university level, because a higher level of education would help them to obtain better employment. Malaysia was also aware that corruption must be eradicated and the public service delivery system improved in order to heighten efficiency and productivity and contribute to poverty eradication and economic growth.

24. Despite national efforts, international technical assistance, ODA and debt relief were still needed to liberate resources that could be directed towards activities designed to eradicate poverty.

25. **Mr. Albader** (Qatar) said that, while global development had made unprecedented progress since the 1950s, a large number of third-world States were experiencing economic stagnation and a large number of people, particularly in rural areas, suffered from poverty, hunger and need. In the wake of the Millennium Summit and the World Summit for Social Development, Governments had committed themselves to providing assistance to rural populations as part of efforts to halve extreme poverty by 2015. The key to reducing poverty was sustainable development strategies that included investment in rural areas and social services. The decline in per capita food production in developing countries would continue unless better access to land, capital, credit, training and technology was provided.

26. Poverty was intimately linked with unemployment. The Secretary-General's report had

shown that half the people currently living in poverty were of working age and that a majority of those who did work in developing countries lived below the two dollar a day poverty threshold. Poverty reduction policies needed to focus on job creation and upgrading skills. Women in rural areas faced special burdens because of their reproductive role and lack of equal access to resources, paid employment, education, and decision-making positions.

27. The Secretary-General's report on human resources development (A/60/318) had noted that escaping the poverty trap required investment in basic infrastructure and human resources that developing countries could not undertake without international assistance. Qatar called on the developed States Members of the United Nations, other development partners in the United Nations system, the Bretton Woods institutions, the private sector, civil society organizations, and non-governmental organizations to increase their investments in developing countries, especially in rural areas. It hoped that the upcoming WTO Ministerial Conference would reaffirm the Doha Round emphasis on free trade in agricultural markets and elimination of all barriers against exports from developing and less developed States. The full and fair participation by rural societies in global development was a prerequisite for achievement of the Millennium Development Goal of halving poverty by the year 2015.

28. **Mr. Dall'Oglio** (Observer for the International Organization for Migration (IOM)), referring to the report of the Secretary-General (A/60/318), said that for several years IOM had been working extensively on the impact of the migration of skilled labour and people with advanced education, which exemplified the complex and contradictory nature of the nexus between migration and development.

29. Migration of skilled workers from developing to developed countries was not always a negative phenomenon: countries with a large population and a broad and flexible human resources base could replace the outflows. In such cases, the brain drain represented a brain overflow and benefits, such as remittances and a vast array of resources, largely offset losses in terms of investment in education and training. However, in countries that were short of human capital and lacked the capacity to replace the loss of their most qualified workers, such outflows were a major impediment to economic growth.

30. Countries of origin and destination, with the help of international organizations, could effectively cooperate to mitigate the negative impact of the migration of skilled workers. Expatriate populations or "diaspora" played an important role in such partnerships and deserved to be encouraged and sustained in their effort to maintain ties with home countries, through human and financial networks. IOM had developed several programmes to foster such ties, enhancing the mobility of people and resources, which translated into returns, investment and establishment of microenterprises and job creation.

31. There was a growing interest in cooperation between countries of origin and destination. Regional frameworks and regional and interregional consultation on migration issues also offered additional opportunities in that respect. IOM was fully engaged in ongoing international efforts to turn the brain drain into a brain gain through the transfer and infusion of knowledge, skills and technology into home countries.

32. **Mr. Talbot** (Guyana), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) member States that were also Members of the United Nations, said that the Caribbean region was among the areas in which improvement was needed in fighting extreme poverty and hunger. The rate of economic growth was insufficient to achieve significant progress but, in spite of their trading, environment and health vulnerabilities, countries of the region recognized their responsibility to work towards their own development and improve the living conditions of their people. It was a moral obligation for the international community to do its utmost to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, in particular the goal of eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, and CARICOM member States welcomed various initiatives by donors to establish deadlines for ODA targets.

33. He recognized the contribution of microcredit to the fight against poverty and said that CARICOM member States continued to advocate partnerships for providing greater access to microcredit and microfinance by the poorest sectors.

34. The Fourth World Conference on Women had identified the eradication of poverty among women as an integral component of poverty alleviation strategies. Caribbean women were still disadvantaged: in addition to opportunities for improving their living conditions,

they should be given greater access to education, skills training, health care and employment.

35. Poverty in the Caribbean was generally characterized by large income disparities and was linked to a high rate of unemployment. Education was a critical tool and leaders of the region were striving to provide universal access to all levels of education and to upgrade educational standards. He also acknowledged the centrality of employment to poverty eradication, the need for sustained investment in long-term human resources development, and the adverse impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the brain drain on the scarce human resources in the region.

36. The negative effects of globalization had continued to widen the economic and social gap between the developed and developing countries, increasing inequality of income and opportunities. Governments in the Caribbean region had opened their markets, observed good governance and encouraged technology transfer in an effort to make globalization and trade liberalization positive factors.

37. CARICOM member States noted with satisfaction the determination of world leaders at the 2005 Summit to ensure the timely and full realization of the development goals and objectives agreed at the major conferences and summits. The need for action to eradicate world hunger and poverty and to offer decent and humane living conditions was all the more urgent in an age of advanced technology and improved living standards.

38. **Mr. Atiyanto** (Indonesia) said that practical action was needed to follow up the initiatives agreed at the 2005 World Summit and to monitor their implementation.

39. While developing country governments were responsible for their own development, based on national conditions, sovereignty and priorities, their efforts would be meaningless without an effective and stronger voice in international economic and decision-making and norm setting. A commitment for an open, equitable, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system must be made. The Sixth WTO Ministerial Conference would contribute in a number of areas that would help developing countries to achieve sustained economic growth and sustainable development.

40. Highlighting the importance of migration and technology transfer, he reiterated the commitment of Indonesia to poverty eradication. The Government had a plan to boost economic performance and promote the development of the rural economy and agriculture for poverty alleviation. It was also implementing a pro-poor strategy that favoured growth and employment. The reduction of government subsidies for oil had released funds for quarterly cash subsidies to assist the poor. Microcredit, gender issues and the fight against corruption were also being promoted.

41. Indonesia continued to address the special needs of other developing countries within the context of South-South cooperation, through various regional and interregional mechanisms, and through tripartite arrangements in collaboration with donor communities.

42. **Mr. Ahmed** (World Tourism Organization) said that the conversion of the World Tourism Organization into a United Nations specialized agency was further recognition of the potential of tourism to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The stakeholders of the tourism industry could not remain indifferent to the question of poverty. Furthermore, there was evidence that sustainable forms of tourism lifted vast numbers of people out of poverty.

43. Illustrating the economic role of tourism in developing and least developed countries, he said that developing countries had 19.3 per cent of total international tourism receipts. Tourism was the main export in one third of all developing countries, and a major foreign exchange earner in the least developed countries. Moreover, growth in international tourist arrivals had been faster in the developing world than in high-income countries, particularly between 1990 and 2003.

44. In addition, tourism was one of the few industries in which most developing countries had a comparative advantage over developed countries. The considerable expansion of tourism activities, even to isolated destinations, and the important linkages of tourism with other economic activities explained why tourism was particularly well placed to meet the needs of the poor. In addition, tourism was highly labour-intensive, requiring little training, and provided jobs for all, including women and young persons. Barriers to establishing a new small enterprise in the sector were quite low, which had led the World Tourism Organization to conduct research on the possible role

of microfinance in the development of small and medium-sized enterprises in tourism and development in poor areas.

45. However, poverty reduction through tourism would not be automatic; it required willingness by a strong political leadership and firm private sector commitment to assume their social responsibility to destination countries, local communities and workers. At the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the World Tourism Organization had launched the concept of sustainable tourism as a tool for poverty elimination.

46. Governments should integrate sustainable tourism development in national poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs), as recommended in the Declaration on Tourism and the Millennium Development Goals, adopted on the eve of the 2005 World Summit. The Declaration also drew attention to the crucial role of tourism in small island developing States and other tourism-dependent developing economies.

47. **Mr. Wagle** (Nepal) said that poverty reduction, being a multidimensional issue, must be addressed in a coherent manner and at all geographical levels, especially with regard to the developing and least developed countries.

48. Poverty eradication remained the sole objective of his country's current economic development plan, which focused on broad-based economic growth, social sector development, social inclusion with targeted job creation programmes, and good governance through efficient public service, community participation and decentralized government. Emphasis was placed on people-centred policies and fair distribution of opportunities and benefits, and programmes to eradicate gender discrimination, putting Nepal on track towards the Millennium Development Goal of halving extreme poverty by 2015. However, disparities between rural and urban populations persisted, and terrorist activities had undermined development efforts. A programme was in place to increase human security, eliminate corruption and deal with related issues.

49. A long-term programme had been designed to enhance the agriculture sector, which was beset by low productivity and underemployment, and a land bank was being established to allocate land to landless peasants and freed bond labourers in order to promote productive use of farmland. The Government was also creating jobs at home and seeking employment

opportunities abroad; the latter remained a fundamental component of Nepal's employment policy, with remittances from young Nepalese sustaining the economy and providing an alternative source of household income.

50. However, poor countries could not tackle poverty alone, but required increased aid, debt relief, capacity-building support and an equitable multilateral trading system to spur growth. The international community must support efforts to replace the vicious circle of underdevelopment, unemployment and violence with a virtuous circle of peace, development and productive employment and to make economic sectors benefit the working poor. With the elimination of apparel quotas in January 2005, Nepal's garment exports — a major foreign exchange source — had declined by 39 per cent, and over 60 garment industries had closed down, with the loss of 50,000 jobs.

51. Poverty-stricken countries needed markets to be opened up in the areas of their comparative advantage as well as technology transfer and more funding assistance for education and vocational training. Their surplus low-cost unskilled labourers should be allowed cross-border mobility in order to help lift their families out of poverty, which remained the most daunting challenge to countries' collective wisdom. The world's poorest were still grappling with poverty and widening inequality, and with pledges unfulfilled. Combined and concerted efforts in the context of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty could achieve development and prosperity for all.

52. **Mr. Sadykov** (Kazakhstan) said that his Government assigned priority to poverty eradication, employment of women, aid to poor families, development of small and medium-sized businesses, and large-scale social programmes. Under its poverty reduction programme for 2003-2005, the proportion of poor had been reduced from 34 per cent in 1999 to 16 per cent in 2004, thus meeting relevant Millennium Development Goal. A series of social reforms begun in 2005 would be completed in 2007, and the National Programme of Health Care Reform and Development for 2005-2010 had been launched. The country's macroeconomic policy would determine the criteria for wage growth, adjusted for inflation, to keep pace with growth in labour productivity in order to ensure that households genuinely benefited from economic progress.

53. Regarding human resources development, the State awarded scholarships for the top 3,000 college students to study in the world's leading universities. Women were increasingly present in the labour force, and effective mechanisms were being developed to integrate them more fully into social and political life and increase their representation at all decision-making levels; women currently filled 60 per cent of public sector posts, and close attention was being paid to their economic advancement.

54. A microcredit scheme in which two thirds of the beneficiaries were rural women was being promoted, and the Government would continue to give priority to providing the poor with financial resources, including an enhanced microcredit framework. The contribution of cooperatives to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals was widely recognized; they had been instrumental in enabling the poor, especially women, to fully realize their productive potential. Kazakhstan also had a microcredit scheme for vulnerable groups and first-time entrepreneurs.

55. Economic development called for policies that addressed potential sources of instability and the wide gap between rich and poor in access to health care, education and participation in social activities. Kazakhstan's goal was a modern, competitive economy in an open, democratic and prosperous society based on the rule of law, wherein the components and traditions of a multinational, multid denominational society could coexist in harmony.

56. **Mr. Bhagwat Singh** (Observer for the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN)) said that the delay in eradicating poverty had been aggravated by the increase in natural disasters, conflicts and disease, and called for greater commitment from the international community. Poverty could be reduced only if ecosystems were conserved and properly managed. There was a direct link between the health of ecosystems and food security, improved health, asset-building, risk reduction and more secure lives for the poor. Conversely, land degradation, desertification, pollution and unequal access to water and productive ecosystems diminished human well-being.

57. IUCN had launched the Conservation for Poverty Reduction Initiative creating a broad alliance of governmental and civil society organizations to restore and conserve ecosystem services essential for ensuring

sustainable livelihoods. Poverty reduction funding and Millennium Development Goal planning must mainstream water-related issues and better management of fisheries and agricultural lands, and the rights of the poor to lands and resources must be secured.

58. Women's unequal access to many key resources impeded their contribution to economic development. Gender equality was critical to poverty reduction and the conservation and sustainable use of resources. Research on the gender aspects of the use of natural resources had shown women to be central to any successful anti-poverty strategy. However, although women were largely responsible for food security and health care in the home, they enjoyed limited access to education, income and capital- and asset-building. IUCN had long recognized gender inequities in natural resource use, as highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General (A/60/162), and had actively integrated the issue into its conservation work in support of the poor; it would also contribute to making the World Summit commitment to further actions for eliminating gender discrimination a reality.

59. **Mr. Salazar-Pineda** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that the structural inequality between North and South was part and parcel of poverty. The systemic causes of poverty were rooted in the current international financial architecture, whose neo-liberal conditionalities rendered the goal of poverty eradication illusory. The voices of the developing countries must be heard in the international financial institutions and a fair, transparent, development-centred international trading system based on complementarity must be installed, with particular respect for the principle of special and differentiated treatment for developing countries.

60. Poverty was a social phenomenon comprising many qualitative facets, the causes of which must first be understood and then addressed. The fight against poverty was essentially political and his Government, which was based on participatory democracy, involved citizens in decision-making on public plans and programmes designed for the exercise of their most fundamental right, the right to rise out of poverty. In his country, human rights were political and participatory rights, enjoyment of which was a necessary step towards the construction of a free, just and equitable society.

61. His country's efforts to boost production included: microcredit; incentives to small and medium-sized enterprises; promotion of the formation of cooperatives, especially by women; revival of inactive businesses; land distribution; and financial and technological support in rural areas. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela had been declared an illiteracy-free territory by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), following literacy campaigns with wide national coverage. The education component of national programmes covered comprehensive day-care centres, school construction, and generalization of all levels of education; the health component, having strengthened the primary medical care system, was making progress on comprehensive medical and hospital care and had achieved a substantial drop in infant mortality.

62. There was no single model of development, just as there was no single model of democracy. His country was convinced that the principal cause of poverty was inequality and the power structure that sustained it both within nations and internationally. Accordingly, the core problem to be addressed was not just poverty, but also wealth and its concentration in the hands of a few. The struggle against poverty must come from the poor themselves, not from the elite or the marketplace.

Agenda item 58: Training and research

(a) United Nations Institute for Training and Research (A/60/304)

(b) United Nations System Staff College in Turin, Italy (A/60/328)

63. **Mr. Boisard** (Executive Director, United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Institute (A/60/304), said that 2005 had been a good year, both operationally and financially. The Institute's activities had increased considerably and, while it had launched no new initiatives or programmes, areas in which it could provide useful contributions had been strengthened to provide more durable training. The number of beneficiaries had increased with the use of e-learning in an increasing number of courses and, finances permitting, short courses on certain aspects of training developed at UNITAR would be made available on CD-ROM.

64. The Institute's programme rested on two main pillars: the first, accounting for about one third of its activities, comprised training in multilateral diplomacy, management of international affairs and preventive diplomacy, as well as programmes for diplomats or delegates accredited to the United Nations, a series of scholarship programmes in international law and conflict resolution, and correspondence courses on peacekeeping. The second, much larger, pillar comprised social and economic capacity-building; not only was the Institute the training arm of many environmental conventions, it also conducted smaller programmes responding to specific needs in international trade, external debt and financial management.

65. Reference to four main themes would illustrate the conformity of the Institute's activities with the Outcome of the recent High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly. The first was the global partnership for development: all UNITAR programmes were prepared in close coordination with one or more bodies both within and outside the United Nations system, enabling the Institute annually to design over 150 workshops, seminars and programmes benefiting some 10,000 participants and 15,000 students following correspondence courses.

66. UNITAR had been one of the main training agents for the implementation of international legal instruments relating to the environment, first and foremost the Conventions on Climate Change, Desertification and Biodiversity and the Rotterdam and Basel Conventions.

67. Financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the European Union and bilateral donors, the Institute's training programme on the implementation of the Framework Convention on Climate Change was carried out in close cooperation with the secretariat of the Convention, in permanent consultation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Under UNITAR auspices, three world-renowned specialized centres — in Colombo, Dakar and Pretoria — were developing an integrated approach to analysis of policies on climate change and sustainable development, in which each partner shed expert light on specific issues. The long-term objective was to encourage South-South cooperation, train trainers and increase the developing countries' capacity to make their voices heard in the global climate change debate.

68. UNITAR also provided training in infrastructure for the sound management of chemicals and wastes: national profile development; capacity-building; risk-management decision-making; integrated national management programmes; pollutant release and transfer registers; and a globally harmonized system of classification and labelling of chemicals. The training was developed in consultation with the relevant United Nations agencies and funded by GEF and bilateral donors, especially Switzerland. The Institute assisted with integrated national programmes, helping countries to identify gaps in their infrastructure and set priorities. Over 120 States had directly benefited from its activities, and many industrialized countries had adopted its methods.

69. Concerning the peaceful settlement of disputes, in addition to the programme in peacemaking and preventive diplomacy, a programme for briefing and debriefing of the Secretary-General's special representatives and envoys served to build up "institutional memory" and strengthen operational efficiency. There was also a programme on the specific needs of women and children in and after conflict, and inexpensive correspondence instruction in peacekeeping operations was also available on CD-ROM.

70. Thanks to the UNITAR partnership with local and municipal authorities and businesses, cities and municipalities worldwide currently focused on a number of specific social issues, including HIV/AIDS. There were currently 12 UNITAR-affiliated training centres on four continents, dispensing training in close cooperation with relevant United Nations agencies and regional and international associations of cities and local authorities. Other activities included the preparation, with UN-Habitat, of a document on access to essential services and a study on local government infrastructure financing with the World Bank; private businesses contributed special expertise and some funding to joint workshops on subjects such as water management. UNITAR had been an organizer of the recent World Summit of cities and local authorities on the information society to prepare the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society about to meet in Tunis.

71. In association with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Institute had launched a series of seminars to train parliamentarians in their responsibilities and role in sustainable development and universal access to essential services. In the new context of international

relations, local authorities, civil society and the private sector would play a larger role in a globalizing, decentralizing society seeking justice and equal opportunities.

72. The Institute's success was due to its precise methodology and the flexibility of its action. Its financial situation was generally satisfactory, and bilateral donors seemingly approved of its capacity-building activities. However, the level of voluntary contributions to the General Fund was too low for the training services UNITAR offered to representatives accredited to the United Nations headquarters offices and insufficient for the extension of those services to other host cities. UNITAR was the only body providing training in multilateral negotiations, public speaking and the drafting of resolutions.

73. Despite its considerable efforts, the Institute had been unable to win over major donors, who perhaps mistakenly believed that its services were not a priority. The issue of whether the United Nations should defray the costs of the Institute's rent and maintenance remained unresolved after years of debate. Although training and institutional capacity-building were important for sustainable development, surprisingly the only United Nations organ devoted to providing them was also the only one that was self-financing, with no financial support from the Organization.

74. **Mr. Ceratto** (Acting Director, United Nations System Staff College), introducing the report of the Director on the College's work, activities and accomplishments (A/60/328), noted that in 2004 the threshold of 10,000 participants had been reached and passed. Training of United Nations country teams took up the lion's share of the College's work; the programme targeted first-time United Nations resident coordinators and coordination officers, conducted strategic planning retreats to bring the Common Country Assessment process to life and finalize the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) strategy. The College expected to assist in the completion of 39 UNDAF exercises in 2005, compared with four in 2002. As a result of the training programme, United Nations country teams were more focused on the priority Millennium Development Goals and were more effective in the planning and implementation of those goals. That illustrated what the College could do when it had adequate and

predictable funding and pursued targets agreed with the sponsor.

75. The second largest area was the peace and security programme, which had trained staff from the Secretariat, United Nations funds and programmes, specialized agencies and elsewhere. Financed by only three donors — Germany, the United Kingdom and Sweden — it had organized 64 training events since 1998 and trained over 1,500 participants. Over 200 staff members had been trained in 2004 and 2005. He invited more partners to provide further support for the launching of a multi-year programme in the area of peace and security. While training or learning were not the answer to all problems, they could help produce a well-trained workforce that could deliver multilateral solutions with unity of purpose. Member States should support the College in its efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the human capital of the entire system with a view to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

76. **Mr. Blake** (Jamaica), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, noted that UNITAR had recorded a significant increase in the number of training initiatives undertaken. The Group of 77 and China particularly appreciated the Institute's effort to assist Member States in building capacity for the sound management of chemicals and waste as well as to support the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in programmes relating to vulnerability, adaptation and mitigation. He also hailed the work of UNITAR in preventive diplomacy. The Institute's expanded number of programmes addressed issues of significant priority to developing countries.

77. The Group of 77 and China supported the Secretary-General's recommendation for UNITAR to continue to expand its training and capacity-building programmes and to cooperate with the specialized institutions within the United Nations system in that regard. Welcoming the Institute's improved funding position, he noted, however, that long-term financial viability was still a concern. Member States, in particular the developed countries, should increase their contributions to the General Fund, taking into account the successful restructuring and revitalization of the Institute and its efforts to comply with the recommendations of the Board of Auditors as well as the importance of training. He urged Member States to seek an expeditious resolution of the issue of rental and maintenance costs of the premises used by UNITAR.

The Group of 77 and China would also support the recommendation for the agenda item "Training and research" to be examined every two years by the General Assembly, instead of the current practice of annual reviews.

78. **Mr. Anaedu** (Nigeria), expressing his delegation's firm support for UNITAR, said that the Institute could not provide the services that Member States often demanded and expected if its resources were derived mainly from earmarked funds, usually with stringent conditionalities and from a very narrow donor base. UNITAR should be treated like other institutions within the United Nations that enjoyed rent-free and maintenance-free services. If need be, the relevant article of the Institute's Statute should be amended to allow it to be funded from the regular budget of the United Nations.

79. It was not clear what the programme in "environmental democracy" was intended to achieve. UNITAR should concentrate on its core programmes that brought the greatest benefit to the wider membership, rather than pursuing programmes premised on nebulous, controversial concepts. The "environmental democracy" programme should therefore be discontinued. It was equally unclear why UNITAR should single out oil as the only commodity that generated important revenues for central governments. He asked whether UNITAR would also design programmes for the equitable management of services and commodities in developed and developing countries where there was agitation for the equitable sharing of resources as a means to promote communal peace. Such programmes, in the political and economic domain, were beyond the competence of UNITAR, which should confine itself to better managing its limited resources within its core programmes in order to win and sustain the confidence of donors.

80. **Ms. Quintavalle** (Italy) welcomed the training provided by the Staff College to United Nations country teams and expressed strong support for its activities in strengthening the capacity of staff in the area of conflict prevention and early warning, especially in Africa within the framework of NEPAD. The College's training policy combined know-how with specific competencies of many different players, thus contributing to system-wide coherence. One of the College's main functions had been training United Nations staff in the field, which should continue. At the same time, in view of the need to enhance the

Organization's management culture, it should also devote attention to training staff at the headquarters of the various United Nations bodies. A well-trained, educated staff could provide more effective multilateral solutions in the areas of development, peace and collective security.

Agenda item 54: Globalization and interdependence
(continued)

- (d) **Preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of funds of illicit origin and returning such assets to the countries of origin**
(continued) (A/C.2/60/L.29)

Draft resolution on preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of funds of illicit origin and returning such assets to the countries of origin

81. **Ms. Gordon** (Jamaica), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/60/L.29 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that it relied heavily on the agreed language of the previous year's resolution on the topic, but had been updated to take into account the impending entry into force of the United Nations Convention against Corruption. She hoped that it would enjoy broad support and urged its adoption by consensus.

Agenda item 52: Sustainable development (continued)

- (c) **International Strategy for Disaster Reduction**
(continued) (A/C.2/60/L.27)
- (f) **Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy, including the implementation of the World Solar Programme 1996-2005** (continued)
(A/C.2/60/L.28)

Draft resolution on natural disasters and vulnerability

82. **Ms. Gordon** (Jamaica), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/60/L.27 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that it was similar to the previous year's resolution on the same topic and endeavoured to convey the impact and ferocity of the increased number of natural disasters in recent months, as well as the underlying risk factors and vulnerabilities in many countries.

83. Paragraph 3 of the text should read: "Stresses the importance of the Hyogo Declaration and the Hyogo

Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters and the priorities for action that States, regional, international organizations and international financial institutions as well as other concerned actors should take into consideration in their approach to disaster risk reduction and implement them, as appropriate, to their own circumstances and capacities, bearing in mind the vital importance of addressing the adverse effects of natural disasters in efforts to implement their national development plans and to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;". In paragraph 5, the word "vulnerable" should be moved and inserted between the words "those" and "among", while the words "that are" should be deleted. She hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

Draft resolution on promotion of new and renewable sources of energy, including the implementation of the World Solar Programme 2006-2015

84. **Ms. Gordon** (Jamaica) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/60/L.28 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. It was similar to the previous resolution, but had been updated to take into account both the Secretary-General's report, which credited the World Solar Programme with significantly raising global awareness about the increased role of new and renewable sources of energy in the global energy supply, and current thinking in that area. The draft was requesting a 10-year extension for the Programme. In paragraph 7, the words "International Conference on" should be inserted before the word "Renewable", with a comma being added after "2005". She hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

Agenda item 57: Operational activities for development (continued)

- (b) **South-South cooperation: economic and technical cooperation among developing countries** (continued) (A/C.2/60/L.31)

Draft resolution on South-South cooperation

85. **Ms. Gordon** (Jamaica), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/60/L.31 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that it attempted to highlight the many significant events that had taken place in the context of South-South cooperation, including the Second South

Summit and the fourteenth session of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation and their respective outcomes, as well as initiatives at the national, regional and international levels. She highlighted in particular paragraphs 16 and 17. Referring to paragraph 15, she noted that "of 23 December 2003" should be inserted at the very end after "58/2". She hoped that the draft would be adopted by consensus.

Agenda item 55: Groups of countries in special situations (*continued*)

(a) Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (*continued*) (A/C.2/60/L.32)

Draft resolution on the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries: high-level meeting on the comprehensive global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010

86. **Ms. Gordon** (Jamaica), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/60/L.32 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that it addressed the need to advance the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action as well as preparations for the 2006 high-level meeting on the comprehensive global review of the Programme's implementation, as reflected in paragraphs 5 to 9. In paragraph 6, the word "for" should be replaced with the word "to". She hoped that the draft would be adopted by consensus.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.